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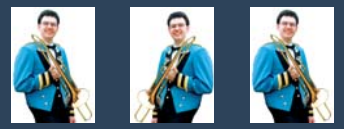
Chan 4543

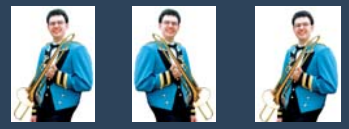
CHANDOS BRASS

Bone Idyll

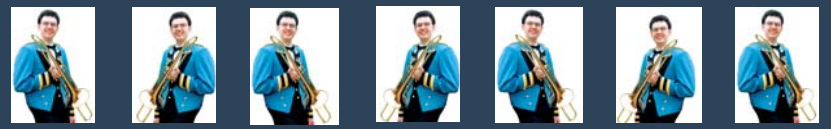
The Williams Fairey Band



Brett Baker
trombone



James Gourlay
Bryan Hurdley
conductors



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To Sarah and my family

I have many people to thank for the existence of this disc. Over the years I have had so many excellent teachers and advisors and it would be an enormous task to acknowledge all of them. I will therefore thank them all collectively as they know who they are.

In particular I would like to thank the Fairey Band and Chandos without whom this CD could not have been possible. I also wish to thank Robin Dewhurst and Philip Sparke for composing works specifically for this venture.

Finally, I would like to thank Steve Walkley for his help and guidance on programme choice and interpretation of the works chosen, and Chris Houlding for his advice in overcoming the technical difficulties of the works. Of course I would also like to thank the members of my team Andy Gillooly and James Cant who are always available for advice and help and to John Cresswell for his patience and hard work in organizing this recording.

Brett Baker

Bone Idyll

	Robin Dewhurst (b. 1965)	
1	Brasilia	4:20
	Trad. arr. Adrian Drover	
2	Annie Laurie	3:03
	Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921) arr. James Gourlay	
3	Cavatine§	5:09
	Trad. arr. Gordon Langford	
4	Nobody knows the trouble I see	4:38
	Derek Bourgeois (b. 1941)	
5	Bone Idyll§	4:52
	Gordon Langford (b. 1930)	
6	Rhapsody§	12:39
	Philip Sparke (b. 1951)	
	Prelude and Scherzo	**7:55**
7	Prelude –	3:39
8	Scherzo	4:16
	Larry Henley/Jeff Silbar arr. Darrol Barry	
9	The wind beneath my wings	5:47
	Alexandre Guilmant (1837–1911)	
	arr. Klaas van der Woude	
10	Morceau symphonique	6:56

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		Benjamin Godard (1849–1895) arr. Gordon Langford	
11		Berceuse de Jocelyn ('Angels guard thee')	5:13
		Ferdinand David (1810–1873) arr. Bryan Hurdley*/Leslie Condon†	
		Concertino§	**15:04**
12	I	Allegro maestoso*	5:59
13	II	Andante, marcia funebre†	4:56
14	III	Allegro maestoso†	4:16
			TT 76:32

Brett Baker trombone
Williams Fairey Band
James Gourlay§
Bryan Hurdley

Bone Idyll

Brasilia
A new piece commissioned by Brett Baker for this disc, *Brasilia* conjures up all the atmosphere of carnival time in Rio, as well as providing the soloist with a great opportunity to display his talents in a lighter (but no less demanding) style of music. The composer, Robin Dewhurst, whilst not yet a household name, is undoubtedly a young man from whom we can expect to hear more in the future.

Annie Laurie
One of many lovely tunes from 'North o' the Border', this provides another opportunity for the soloist to display the lyrical side of his playing skills. How fitting that this arrangement should come from the pen of Scottish-based Adrian Drover, a former bass trombonist and arranger with the famous Maynard Ferguson big band of the 1970s.

Cavatine
Camille Saint-Saëns was a well-known French composer, pianist and organist whose dazzling musical talent at a relatively early age won him the admiration of Gounod, Rossini, Berlioz, and especially Liszt, who hailed him as the world's greatest organist. He was organist at the Madeleine (1857–75) and a teacher at the Ecole Niedermeyer (1861–65), where Gabriel Fauré was among his devoted pupils. On behalf of new French music he co-founded the Société nationale de musique (1871).

The typically French characteristics of conservative musical style – neat proportions, clarity, elegance of line – are all to be found in his best compositions, amongst the best-known of which are the Symphony No. 3, the 'Organ' Symphony, his opera *Samson et Dalila*, and *Le carnaval des animaux*, of which he forbade performances in his own lifetime with the exception of 'Le cygne'. The *Cavatine* Op. 144 is one of a number of solo instrumental pieces written by Saint-Saëns, France being one of the few countries in which the trombone flourished as a solo instrument in the late nineteenth century. It is another piece which has become popular in the serious trombone repertoire.

This arrangement for brass band, especially for Brett Baker to perform on this disc, has been made by the Principal Conductor of the Williams Fairey Band, James Gourlay, himself a renowned tuba soloist formerly with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and currently principal tubist with the the Zurich Opera Orchestra.

Nobody knows the trouble I see
Take a well-known spiritual typical of those you may remember being sung by Paul Robeson, an arranger like Gordon Langford (also a trombonist!), a soloist like Brett Baker, a band like Faireys, mix them together and it must be a recipe for something special!

Bone Idyll
The title alludes to the phrase 'bone idle', but there is no room for idleness here since the music calls for considerable agility from the soloist, and the band! *Bone Idyll* takes the form of a theme and variation, the theme being the King's drinking song 'Old Ale' from Derek Bourgeois's opera *Rumplestiltskin*. The piece was written in 1980 for Steve Walkley and the Sun Life Band, of which Bourgeois was Musical Director at the time, to play at the Granada TV Band of the Year competition. In fact, *Old Ale* was one of the original titles considered by the composer for the solo, the other being *Napoleon* – for brass band and *bone apart*!!!

Rhapsody
This is, without doubt, a masterpiece of scoring for solo trombone and brass band, and marked a major milestone in that particular repertoire. It is certainly not performed as often as it deserves to be, despite being one of the pieces, if not *the* piece, which most emerging young brass band trombone soloists aspire to play. It really is a Rhapsody in the true sense, (i.e. a musical fantasy or poem full of strong feeling or excitement), and places considerable demands on the soloist, but it makes no attempt to be highbrow in character and, being very tuneful, is easily accessible to any listener (a Langford hallmark). One of the important features is what the composer describes as the 'big tune', which carries the unique and unusual instruction *molto cantabile e* ***lusheroso*** – unusual, perhaps, until you take into account the fact that this piece was commissioned for that great trombonist Don Lusher to play in the Gala Concert of the National Brass Band Festival in 1975, where it received its first performance.

Prelude and Scherzo
Philip Sparke needs no introduction to afficionados of modern-day brass- and wind-band music. His output has been prolific during the past ten to fifteen years and includes a string of light concert pieces in addition to the more substantial works for which he is best known, including the well-loved *Land of the Long White Cloud* (*Aetearoa*), *Year of the Dragon*, *Harmony Music*, and *Enigma Variations*. The hallmarks of his music are strong and energetic rhythms and challenging technical passages, sometimes interspersed with reflective passages of great beauty, and it is these ingredients which have made his music attractive to players and listeners alike. *Prelude and Scherzo* is another of the pieces commissioned by Brett Baker especially for this disc, and is a particularly challenging piece for the soloist, with a high tessitura in the Prelude and the considerable technical challenges throughout the piece – certainly not a solo for the faint-hearted, but it displays Brett Baker's talents to good effect.

The wind beneath my wings
In its original form, this beautiful song from the film *Beaches* was sung by Bette Midler. No doubt listeners will agree that it lends itself ideally to the voice of the trombone in this arrangement by Darrol Barry.

Morceau symphonique (Concert Piece)
Alexandre Guilmant is regarded primarily as one of the finest organists of his time, having played for the inauguration of the great organ of Notre Dame in Paris. However, as a composer his influence was also very significant, having written many pieces for his own instrument, and also works for soloists, choir and orchestra, and a quantity of chamber music. In fact, in his finest works he emerges as one of the outstanding examples of Romanticism in French church music. The *Morceau symphonique* is one of a number of solo instrumental pieces he wrote for the Paris Conservatory, and is listed in the catalogue of his works as a piece for trombone and piano. However, judging from the title, and the way the piano part is written, there is every reason to assume that the work was originally conceived with an orchestral accompaniment. For certain, it was not conceived with brass band in mind, although one cannot help feeling that Guilmant would have approved of the playing of Brett Baker and the Williams Fairey Band in this transcription by Klaas van der Woude.

Berceuse de Jocelyn ('Angels guard thee')
Benjamin Godard was a late-nineteenth-century French composer, most of whose works were sentimental salon pieces for piano although his serious music, which includes symphonies and chamber music, shows a more classical orientation. *Angels guard thee*, is the English title of the *Berceuse* from Godard's opera *Jocelyn*, and takes the form of a lullaby. This sensitive arrangement by Gordon Langford is a welcome inclusion on this disc, and provides an ideal vehicle by which the soloist can express the more reflective and subdued side to playing the trombone, a side which is all too often overlooked by many young players.

Concertino

Ferdinand David, a renowned violinist and composer, was the leader of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, when the better-known composer Felix Mendelssohn was its chief conductor during the early nineteenth century. Also in the orchestra at that time was an extremely versatile instrumentalist by the name of Carl Traugott Queisser, who is said to have been an accomplished, self-taught, performer on almost every instrument from the double bass to the violin, and from the piccolo to the trombone. For many years Queisser was a violinist with the then famous Matthai Quartet, but he made his greatest contribution as a trombonist with the Gewandhaus Orchestra from 1820 until 1843, appearing as soloist on no less than twenty-six occasions, and enjoying a reputation in Germany which is supposed to have been comparable with such virtuosi as Paganini and Liszt. One of his great disappointments was an unfulfilled promise on the part of Mendelssohn, greatly impressed by Queisser, to write him a trombone concerto. However, David was a significant figure in German musical life, as a performer having played a prominent part in the success of Mendelssohn's famous Violin Concerto, and as a composer with five violin concertos, a bassoon concerto, many songs and a series of other pieces to his credit. Being aware of his colleague's disappointment with Mendelssohn, David wrote his trombone Concertino for Queisser in 1837. Its first performance was a great success and it has remained one of the most popular pieces in the serious trombone solo repertoire.

In terms of a brass-band score of the David Concertino, only the second and third movements existed in an arrangement by Leslie Condon prior to this disc being planned. However, in order that Brett Baker should be able to record the complete work, Bryan Hurdley, Resident Conductor of the Williams Fairey Band, has very kindly arranged the first movement.

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Brett Baker comes from Gloucestershire and his brass-band career began at the age of ten when his father introduced him to the Bream Silver Band. He soon progressed to the Lydbrook Silver Band and during his time there he won many local solo competitions, and in 1988 and 1989 he was the Junior Trombone Champion of Great Britain. Before joining the Williams Fairey Band as principal trombonist in 1992, Brett Baker played with the Flowers (Gloucester) Band and the National Youth Band of Great Britain. It is with the Williams Fairey Band that he has matured to become one of the leading brass-band trombone soloists of his generation.

Fifteen times British Open Champions, seven times winners of the title 'National Champion Band of Great Britain' and 1996 All England Masters Champions, the **Williams Fairey Band** is in constant demand for concerts both at home and abroad. In 1993 the Band were holders of both the National and British Open titles and in 1994 they were European Champions. Apart from its regular appearances throughout the British Isles the band makes regular trips abroad to countries such as Canada, Hong Kong, Switzerland, Germany and Holland. Since its formation the Band has had an illustrious line-up of conductors: James Gourlay is currently Principal Conductor and Bryan Hurdley is Resident Conductor.

After studying at the Royal College of Music **James Gourlay** was a member of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Symphony Orchestra and is currently solo tuba in the Zurich Opera House. As a soloist and chamber music player he has performed all over the world, most notably as a member of the Philip Jones and English Brass Ensembles. Solo engagements have included first performances of works written for him by such composers as Gregson, Horowitz and Sparke. Since living in Switzerland James Gourlay has devoted much of his time to conducting and writing for brass band and is one of the most successful conductors on the Swiss brass-band scene.

Bryan Hurdley won a scholarship to the Birmingham School of Music where he gained distinction in teaching, performing and recital diplomas and was the winner of many prestigious performance prizes. A founder member of the English Tuba Consort he has travelled widely in Europe and the USA. In 1993 Bryan Hurdley was appointed Director of the Birmingham Conservatoire Brass Band and is currently tutor in lower brass at the University of Warwick. Over recent years he has enjoyed an increasing reputation as one of the finest conductors of his generation and from 1989–1995 he was Musical Director of the Sun Life Band before taking up the position of Resident Conductor with the Williams Fairey Band.

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principal conductor	James Gourlay
resident conductor	Bryan Hurdley
principal cornet	Brian Taylor
solo cornet	Philip Chalk
	Gary Parker
	Peter Read
soprano cornet	Craig Bennett
repiano cornet	Robert Westicott
second cornet	Sean Conway
	Mark Peacock
third cornet	James Leggat
	Raymond Peacock
flugel horn	Simon Stonehouse
solo horn	Sandy Smith
first horn	Simon Jones
second horn	Kevin Teers
solo euphonium	David Welsh
second euphonium	Ian Yates
solo baritone	Keith Muggeridge
second baritone	Nigel Beasley
solo trombone	Brett Baker
first trombone	Steve Walkley
second trombone	Andrew Gillooly
bass trombone	James Cant
E flat bass	Shaun Crowther
	Geoffrey Harrop
BB flat bass	Derek Jackson
	Gareth Johnson
percussion	Jason Jones
	Stuart Peacock
	Paul Lovatt-Cooper
band manager	John Cresswell

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CHANDOS DIGITAL **CHAN 4543**

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